

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-06

SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 PA-01 PRS-01

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ENRG, IS

SUBJ: ISRAELI OIL EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION

REF: TEL AVIV 7494

1. EMBOFF ON DEC 16 ACCOMPANIED OFFICIAL OF LAPIDOTH OIL CO. ON VISIT TO DRILL SITE AT ASHDOD AND TO KOCHAV-HELETZ-BROR OILFIELDS. ASHDOD DRILLING BEGAN THREE MONTHS AGO WITH INTENTION TO REACH FOUR THOUSAND METERS BUT HAS NOT BEEN STOPPED FOR SEVERAL WEEKS AT TWENTY-SIX HUNDRED METERS UDE TO TECHNICAL PROBLEMS. (UNUSUAL COMBINATION OF CONNECTING HIGH AND LOW PRESSURE LAYERS SEVEN HUNDRED METERS APART IN "OPEN HOLE" SHAFT BELOW EIGHTEEN HUNDRED METERS. FUTURE OF EFFORT IS IN DOUBT AS SEVERAL ATTEMPTS TO PLUG LOW PRESSURE AREA HAVE ALREADY FAILED.) LAPIDOTH OFFICIAL SPECULATED THAT RIG MAY BE MOVED TO PETACH TIKVA IF PROBLEM NOT SOON RESOLVED. ANOTHER RIG UNTIL RECENTLY OPERATING AT YAGUR (REFTEL) HAS BEEN RELOCATED AT SDE BOKER. TERMS OF NEW DRILLING AT YAGUR BEING CURRENTLY NEGOTIATED.

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2. COMBINED CURRENT OUTPUT OF SEVEN WELLS AT KOCHAV AND EIGHTEEN

AT HELETZABROR FIELDS IS MEAGER SEVEN HUNDRED BARRELS PER DAY, WHICH CONSTITUTES ISRAEL'S TOTAL CRUDE PRODUCTION. WELLS PRODUCING LIQUID MIXTURE WHICH IS BETWEEN SIXTY AND NINETY PERCENT SALT WATER. RETRIEVAL COST FOR MEDIUM-WEIGHT CRUDE APPROXIMATELY TWO DOLLARS PER BARREL. SOME WELLS IN AREA ARE ALREADY DEAD AND ECONOMIC LIFESPAN OF REMAINDER IS RELATIVELY SHORT. OFFICIAL SAID HOWEVER THAT FIRST EFFORT WITH NEW DEEP-DRILLING EQUIPMENT (NOW BEING ASSEMBLED IN LAUREL, MISS.) EXPECTED TO BEGIN IN MARCH OR APRIL 1976 JUST NORTH OF PRESENT KOCHAV FIELD. HOPE IS TO FIND DEEPER AND MORE EXTENSIVE "DAUGHTER TRAP" IN GEOLOGICALLY-PROMISING AREA. (AMERICAN CONTRACT TEAM WILL CONCURRENTLY TRAIN ISRAELIS ON NEW EQUIPMENT AND CARRY OUT FIRST DEEP-DRILLING).)

3. OFFICIAL SAID THAT NUMBER OF LAPIDOTH PERSONNEL HAD INCREASED BY ONE-THIRD IN LAST SIX MONTHS TO THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTH. WITH IMPENDING RECEIPT OF TWO ADDITIONAL RIGS FROM NETIVEI NEFT PLUS NEW DEEP RIG, HE STILL ESTIMATES THAT LAPIDOTH WILL NEED FORTY MORE WORKERS. HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT SOFTENING OF LABOR MARKET IN ISRAEL WOULD ALLEVIATE HIS PROBLEM OF SHORTAGE OF SEMI-SKILLED WORKERS
(LAPIDOTH IS GOVERNMENT COMPANY WITH LOW GOVERNMENT PAY SCALES.)
LAPIDOTH PRESENTLY EMPLOYS ABOUT TWENTY-FIVE GAZA ARABS,
OFFICIAL SAID.
TOON

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